



May 2014



What Can I Do?



Reduce polluted runoff. Wash your car on grass or gravel rather than pavement to prevent the soapy, grimy wash water from running off your property.

Bay Fact



The Bay is surprisingly shallow. With an average depth, including all tidal tributaries, of about 21 feet, a person who is 6 feet tall could wade through more than

From the desk of...
Martin O'Malley, Governor of Maryland



This month brought exciting news for the Chesapeake Bay: we are turning the corner in our important mission to restore our Bay's oysters.

According to DNR's annual survey, the combined measure of oyster abundance and size in the Chesapeake Bay has more than doubled since 2010, showing the largest amount of oysters present since scientists began monitoring in 1985.

The upswing was driven by high oyster survival over the past few years and strong reproduction in 2010 and 2012. In addition, the survey found that oyster diseases remain at relatively low levels.

Also significant, preliminary harvest reports for the past season have already surpassed 400,000 bushels — with a dockside value in excess of \$13 million — the highest in at least 15 years.

These results are good news for Maryland and show the progress that can be made when we establish and execute solid strategies

700,000 acres of the Bay and never get their hat wet. However, it is very important to use precaution and wear a lifejacket when enjoying the Bay, as currents, inclement weather, swimming and boating accidents, and deep water regions all pose as hazards.

Follow Eyes on the Bay on Twitter



More news

[Farm Bill changes landscape for conservation funding in Bay watershed](#)

[Maryland's oyster population reaches highest level since 1985](#)

[Governor O'Malley signs bills to prepare for impacts of extreme weather](#)

[As 'Save the Bay' Movement matures, are we closer to cleaning up the Chesapeake?](#)

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based on science like our Oyster Restoration and Aquaculture Development Plan, adopted in 2010.

And while this progress is noteworthy, we need to stay the course to ensure a sustainable oyster population can once again play a vital role in the Bay's ecosystem and Maryland's economy. We must continue our commitment to protect our investment and rebuild this essential, iconic species.

Sincerely,

Eyes on the Bay Water Quality Website

Access current water quality conditions from your mobile browser! *Eyes on the Bay* has nine real-time sites deployed in six Chesapeake rivers and the Maryland Coastal Bays. Check out [the mobile site](#) to get immediate feedback on your phone before you head out on the water!

BayStat Update

The BayStat team met with Governor O'Malley's office on April 29 to discuss a number of critical items, including the timeline of the Phosphorus Management Tool, the status of the State's Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) permits, and the work being done by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services around the State to clean up the environment.

Explore and Restore your SchoolShed Update



Is YOUR stream clean? Consider having a [Chesapeake Bay Bernie Fowler Wade In!](#) For decades, former Senator Fowler has hosted a wade-in to measure the depth of water clarity in the Patuxent and raise public awareness on pollution. The annual event, now held in rivers around the Bay, is a low tech (and fun!) science method, which uses a "sneaker index" to measure water quality. Wade out chest-deep or until you can't see your sneakers, and measure the depth with a yard stick. How does it compare

to last year? Read more on helping our streams and rivers [here](#).

Your Government at Work

Maryland's Oyster Population Continues to Improve

The State's ongoing work to restore the Chesapeake Bay's native oyster population is paying off. Results of Maryland's 2013 Fall Oyster Survey indicate the biomass index — a combined measure of oyster abundance and size — has more than doubled since 2010, reaching its highest point since this type



of monitoring began in 1985. [Read more.](#)



Bay Trust Fund Awards \$64 Million

In another boost for Chesapeake Bay water quality, Governor Martin O'Malley has allocated \$64.44 million to the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund in the State's Fiscal Year 2015 budget. Created by the Maryland General Assembly in 2007, this unique financing program — funded through the State's motor fuel and rental car tax — has directed a total of \$256 million to local governments and organizations for 1,000 nonpoint source pollution projects that reduce harmful nutrient and sediment runoff into the Bay. [Read more.](#)



DNR and MDE Join Hearing on Conowingo Dam Relicensing

U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife, held a field hearing to expand the public's understanding of the environmental challenges presented by the build-up of sediment and nutrients behind the Conowingo Dam, as well as the Dam's relicensing process. Information was presented to the public by experts from the many State and federal partners working together to improve water quality, protect aquatic and vegetative life and encourage recreation and fishing in our lakes, rivers, streams and the Chesapeake Bay. [Read more.](#)



O'Malley Passes Bill to Improve Air Quality

Providing financial incentives to expand the purchase of plug-in electric vehicles and recharging stations as a means to improve air quality, save consumers money and support local green jobs, Governor O'Malley and presiding officers signed the Electric Vehicles and Recharging Equipment-Rebates and Tax Credits Bill. The legislation extends a tax credit on the purchase of plug-in electric vehicles for three years, increases the value of the tax credit provided to most vehicles and enhances the incentive on the purchase and installation of recharging station equipment. [Read more.](#)



Maryland Prepares for Climate Change Impacts

Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law two pieces of legislation that will help the State prepare for the impacts of climate change and extreme weather in Maryland. The Bay Acidification Bill will create a Task Force to evaluate and address the effects of changing chemistry in the Chesapeake Bay and other State



waterways. The CoastSmart Bill will ensure standards are followed to make safe and fiscally-wise investments when building or updating State agency structures located in vulnerable coastal areas. [Read more.](#)



Love Maryland's Outdoors? There's an App for That!

Enjoying Maryland's great outdoors has never been easier with DNR's new mobile app! The AccessDNR app provides hunters, anglers, boaters, park-goers — anyone seeking outside adventure — all of the latest in nature-related recreation, information and news right at their fingertips. [Read more.](#)



Mishap Serves as a Reminder: Wear a Lifejacket

A Maryland Natural Resources Police officer and two Good Samaritans in a sailboat battled gusty winds, three-foot waves and bone-chilling water temperatures to [rescue six people](#), all of whom were wearing lifejackets, from a sinking boat in the Magothy River last weekend. This is a great example as we gear up for National Safe Boating Week, May 17-23. As weather warms and boaters enjoy Maryland's waterways, NRP urges the public to develop a precautionary safety and rescue plan, keep a close watch on children and non-swimmers, and ALWAYS wear a lifejacket and have flotation devices on hand. Read [these safety tips](#) before you head out.



Recycle Pesticide Containers in June

For more than two decades, the statewide pesticide container recycling program, offered by the Maryland Department of Agriculture, has helped prevent harmful residues from entering the soil and local waterways, and has saved valuable landfill space by recycling nearly 800,000 empty plastic containers. Starting in June, the program will open its 22nd year of operation, asking farmers, pesticide applicators and others to properly rinse and recycle their empty containers. A total of 24 collection days are scheduled through September at six locations across the State. [Read more.](#)



Study Marine and Environmental Science

For the first time, the University of Maryland College Park will award graduate degrees in marine and environmental sciences jointly with the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science: one of a few academic institutions in the country with a singular focus on environmental science. [Read more.](#)



Chesapeake Bay Blue Crab Population Remains Low

DNR released the 2014 Blue Crab Winter Dredge Survey results, which showed the abundance of spawning-age females was 69 million, declining just below the minimum safe level of 70 million. While the crabbing harvest remained at a safe level for the sixth consecutive year, and juvenile crabs increased 78 percent from 2013's record low, the total abundance of crabs — which include juveniles, and adult males and females — has returned to pre-2008 levels of approximately 300 million. [Read more.](#)



Maryland, Virginia Team Up to Halt Internet Oyster Operation

A Princess Anne man was charged with selling oysters without a license after an investigation by Maryland and Virginia natural resources police officers. "This is a great example of how Maryland and Virginia law enforcement officers work together to ensure oyster harvest laws are followed and consumers are protected," said Commissioner John M.R. Bull of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. [Read more.](#)



Contact Info

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